SARL NEWS - SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER 2011

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. PLEASE NOTE: for audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria, with relays on 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB.

In the news today:

AN ADVANCED LICENSE - JOIN THE DEBATE NEXT SUNDAY

SPECTRUM REGULATOR WHEELS SEEM SLOW EVERYWHERE

NOMINATIONS FOR THE SARL COUNCIL ARE INVITED

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting news items.

AN ADVANCED LICENSE - JOIN THE DEBATE NEXT SUNDAY

According to SARL Forum watchers there has been a heavy debate on the general forum around the proposal to investigate the possibility of an advanced amateur radio license.

The debate started after the SARL posted the audio recording made at the recent Radio Technology in Action symposium held at the National Amateur Radio Centre. In forum postings there are various views, some positive, some indifferent and some totally against. There are also postings making incorrect assumptions such as that the merging of the ZR and ZS licenses had degraded the ZS license.

The reason for ICASA's decision to do away with the ZR license has been explained on several SARL News Bulletins and was the subject of a discussion at this year's annual general meeting. The overriding reason for ICASA's decision was to comply with the CEPT agreement which had been suspended because, since the discontinuation of Morse as a requirement by the ITU for an amateur radio license in the ITU radio regulation, CEPT also changed the condition which then made the ZS license unacceptable due to the Morse requirement for the ZS license. When South Africa had both the ZR and ZS, under the modified CEPT regulation a ZR license holder would thus qualify for operating in CEPT countries but a ZS license holder would not.

Both the ZR and ZS call sign ranges will remain and both are class A licenses with identical privileges and both are fully CEPT compliant.

You are invited to join the on-the-air debate on Sunday 30 October starting at 19:30.

An Edited version (irrelevant discussion outside the subject removed) of the debate is available on the web from the SARL TODAY news item on the home pages.

Clubs are invited to link their local repeater to the teleconference bridge. Send requests to artoday@sarl.org.za before 28 October.

SPECTRUM REGULATOR WHEELS SEEM SLOW EVERYWHERE

It seems that one thing that spectrum regulators have in common is that their wheels move slowly, often very slowly. At the recent ARRL Executive meeting the ARRL Legal adviser told the meeting that more than three years have passed since the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit found that the FCC violated the Administrative Procedure Act when it adopted rules governing broadband over power line (PLT in South Africa) systems. General Counsel Imlay told the EC that the FCC is "long overdue" in releasing a Report and Order to correct the deficiencies in its BPL regulations. According to Imlay, a draft Report and Order is reportedly circulating among the Commissioners, but is not expected to be adopted soon. Imlay also pointed out that FCC is also lax in bringing enforcement action against operating BPL systems that have been shown to be operating in violation of the existing rules. Members of the EC agreed that it is time to request another round of meetings with the FCC Commissioners or their senior staff to press these issues.

The situation is very similar in South Africa where several issues pertaining to PLT and the radio regulations remain unresolved. This week SARL has asked ICASA for an update of when the correction to the regulations affecting amateur radio will be published in the Government Gazette.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE SARL COUNCIL ARE INVITED

This is the first notice for nomination for Councillors for the SARL. Although nominations close on 31 January 2012, it is advisable to make nominations before the onset of the festive season. SARL members in good standing may nominate a member for Council. The nomination must be seconded by another member and include a brief summary of the nominee's amateur radio CV and the acceptance by the nominee that he or she, if elected, is prepared to serve on the SARL Council. It will also be helpful if, in consultation with the nominee, it can be indicated in which capacity the nominee would like to make a contribution to the SARL and Amateur Radio for example treasurer, secretary, HF, contest or VHF manager to mention a few positions.

Motions for the SARL s 2012 AGM should also be submitted before 31 January 2012.

144 MHz ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

A number of Brazilian VHF amateurs have shown great interest in working amateurs on the west coast of South Africa, especially around Cape Town, during Tropo Ducting on 144 MHz. They are: PU1BRA! Werther, PY2ANE Orlando, PY2CAC, Wagner, PY2ZX, Flavio and PY5LF, Luciano. PY1ZV is running a test beacon on 144,070 MHz CW with a horizontally polarized Yagi aimed across the Atlantic Ocean. Naz, ZS1NAZ, has kindly offered to run a Trans-Atlantic CW beacon from his QTH on a frequency of 144,435 MHz radiating 2 500 Watt ERP, and beaming to the east coast of Brazil.

The current 144 MHz two-way world record on Tropo Ducting stands at 4 754 km set up across the Pacific, while 144 MHz signals have been heard in Europe up to 6 600 km on the Ros mode. Contacts have been logged between the east coast of South Africa and Reunion Island on both 144 MHz and 432 MHz, all mode. All this indicate that at least digital or CW contacts on 144 MHz could be possible across the Atlantic Ocean during favourable Hepburn Tropospheric Ducting Forecasts.

Hopefully this will inspire some keen VHF amateurs in the Cape Town area to take up the challenge, and buy or build high gain Yagis for this project. Radio history will be made when a new world record is established on 144 MHz over this sea path of 6 000 km.

SANAE BASE

Gerard de Jong, ZS6KX, is now active from Antarctica as ZS7KX. He is stationed at SANAE 4 Base, Vesleskarvet, Queen Maude Land, Antarctica. He can be heard on 14,175 MHz from 14:00 UTC, weather permitting. He will give a call every half hour until 15:30 UTC. Gerard will be at SANAE 4 until February 2012.

CLUB NEWS

Dates for the ZS6PTA Flea markets for 2012, which will start 08:00 CAT and which be held at the Pretoria Motor Club site in Silverton Pretoria, are as follows: 1) 3 March 2012 2) 2 June 2012 3) 1 September 2012 4) 8 December 2012

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that solar activity is picking up nicely with many sunspots facing the Earth. Sunspot 1 319 has a beta-gamma magnetic field that harbours energy for M-class flares.

For the people doing their own frequency predictions the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 94.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of fun with DX opportunities at varies times of the day.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

30 October - Intechnet on proposed advanced license. Till 31 October - ZL-stations with ZM prefixes and ZL4RUGBY and ZL6RWC on the air. 4/6 November - AMSAT NA Space Symposium in San Jose California. 13 November - Pears HF Competition 12:00 till 16:00 UTC. 19/20 November - SARL Field day competition. 20 November - CW leg of 80 m Club competition. 27 November - Digital competition. 30 November - last day to send logs for Pears HF DX-expedition. 31 January 2012 Last day for submission of nominations vir Council members and also for submission of motions for the 2012 SALL agm. 31 January 2012 - Closing date for submitting papers for SA AMSAT Space Symposium.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items - if possible - in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio TODAY', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 16:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by Gustav, Z6SBWN.

Thank you for listening, 73. /EX

========== Message Ends ==========

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